King CHARLES's SPEECH IN THE *House of Lords*, May *the First*, 1641.

Before he paſt the Bill of ATTAINDER *againſt the* Earl of STRAFFORD.

With ſome other

CURIOUS PIECES:

CONTAINING,

I. The Earl of *Straford's* Letter to the King, perſwading him to paſs the Bill of Attainder.

II. The King's Letter to the Houſe of Lords, in behalf of the ſaid Earl; ſent by the Prince of *Wales*.

III. The Earls Speech on the Scaffold.

IV. The King's Declaration and Repentance for the Death of the ſaid Earl; faithfully Collected from His Majeſty's own Works.

London, Printed for R. *Burleigh*, in *Amen-Corner*. 1715. (Price 2 *d.*)

THE Earl of *Strafford* being a Perſon generally lamented; and the Publiſher finding theſe Papers in the Cloſet of a Perſon of Quality, deceas'd, thought they would not be unacceptable to the Publick; and therefore he thinks fit to publiſh them juſt as he found them, without Paraphraſe or Preamble; that ſo being but a ſmall Price, any one might buy.

NOvember, 1640. Mr. *Denzil Hollis* was ſent from the Commons to the Lords Houſe, to Impeach the Earl of *Strafford* of High-Treaſon; and 28 Articles were exhibited againſt him; and *Weſtminſter-Hall* was the Place appointed for his Trial, where Scaffolds were rais'd on both ſides, nine degrees in hight; the two uppermoſt were for the *Scotch* Commiſſioners, and the *Iriſh* Lords; in the midſt, in a lower aſcent, ſat the Peers of the Realm; a Throne was alſo erected for the King, tho' he never appear'd publickly, but was every day of the Trial in a cloſe Gallery, to hear and obſerve the whole Proceedings and took Notes: The Earl of *Arundel* was Lord High Steward, and the Earl of *Lindſey* Lord High Conſtable. The Charge againſt him was principally manag'd by Mr. *Pym*, Mr. *Glyn*, and

Mr. *Maynard*, Members of the Houſe of Commons, for 15 Days together; and the Earl had Council allow'd him, who were Mr. *Lane*, the Prince's Attorney, Mr. *Gardner*, Recorder of *London*, Mr. *Loe*, and Mr. *Lightfoot*. But the Commons at laſt found him Guilty of Two Articles, *viz.* the 15th and 19th, which were deem'd High-Treaſon: And accordingly, a Bill of Attainder was brought in; the great uneaſineſs the ſame created to King *Charles* the Firſt, and ſome other Matters, the following Papers will inform the Reader.

King

King *CHARLES* I's SPEECH IN THE HOUSE of LORDS,

May the First, 1641.

Before he passed the Bill of *Attainder* against the Earl of *Strafford.*

My LORDS,

Had no Intention to speak of this Business this Day, which is the great Business concerning my Lord of Strafford, *because I wou'd do nothing that might serve to hinder your Occasions. But now it comes so to pass, that seeing of necessity I must have*

have part in that Judgment, I think it moſt neceſſary for me to declare my Conſcience therein.

I am ſure, you all know, I have been preſent at the hearing of this Buſineſs from the one end to the other; and I muſt tell you that in my Conſcience I cannot condemn him of High Treaſon.

It is not fit for me to argue this Buſineſs: I am ſure you will not expect that. A poſitive Doctrine beſt becomes the Mouth of a Prince.

Yet I muſt tell you three Truths, which I am ſure no Body can tell ſo well as my ſelf.

I. *That I never had any Intention of bringing over the* Iriſh *Army, nor ever was adviſed by any body ſo to do.*

II. *That never was any Debate before me, either in Publick Counſel, or Private Committee, of the Diſloyalty of the* Engliſh *Subjects, nor ever had I any Suſpicion of them.*

III. *That I never was Counſelled by any to alter any the leaſt of the Laws of* England, *much leſs to alter all the Laws. Nay, I tell you this, I think no body ever durſt be ſo impudent as to move me to it; for if they had, I ſhould have made*

made them such an Example, and put such a Mark on them, that all Posterity should know my Intentions by it; for my Intention was ever to govern by the Law, and no otherwise.

I desire to be rightly understood, for tho' I tell you in my Conscience I cannot Condemn him of High Treason, *yet I cannot say I can clear him of* Misdemeanors. *Therefore I hope that you may find out a Way to satisfy Justice and your own Fears, and not press my Conscience.*

My Lords,

I hope you know what a tender Thing Conscience is. And I must declare unto you; that, to satisfy the People, I would do great Matters; but in this of Conscience, neither Fear, nor any other Respect whatsoever, shall ever make me go against it.

The Earl of Strafford's *Letter to the* KING, *persuading him to sign his Bill of Attainder.*

TO set Your Majesty's Conscience at Liberty, I do most humbly beseech You, for the preventing such Mischiefs

chiefs as may happen by Your Refusal, to pass the Bill. By this means to remove, praised be God, I cannot say this *accursed* but I confess, this *unfortunate Thing*, forth of the way towards that blessed Agreement which God, I trust, shall for ever establish betwixt You and Your Subjects. Sir, my consent herein shall more acquit You to God, than all the World can do besides: To a willing Man there is no Injury done. And as by God's Grace I forgive all the World, with a calmness and meekness of infinite Contentment to my dislodging Soul; so, Sir, I can give up the Life of this World with all cheerfulness imaginable, in the just acknowledgment of Your exceeding Favours; and only beg, that in Your Goodness You would vouchsafe to cast Your gracious Regard upon my poor Son and his three Sisters, less or more, and no otherwise, than their unfortunate Father shall appear more or less guilty of this Death. God preserve Your Majesty.

Your Majesty's most humble and faithful Subject and Servant,

Strafford.

The

The KING's *Letter to the House of Lords, in behalf of the Earl. Presented by the Prince of* Wales.

My Lords,

I Did Yesterday satisfie the Justice of the Kingdom, by Passing the Bill of Attainder against the Earl of *Strafford*: But Mercy being as inherent and inseparable to a King as Justice, I desire in some measure to shew that likewise, by suffering that unfortunate Man to fulfil the natural Course of his Life in close Imprisonment; yet so, that if he ever make the least offer to escape, or offer directly or indirectly to meddle in any sort of Publick Business, especially with me, either by Message or Letter, it shall cost him his Life without further Process. This, *if it may be done* without the discontent of my People, will be an unspeakable Contentment to me.

To which end, as in the first place, I by this Letter do earnestly desire your Approbation, and to endear it the more, have chosen him to carry it, who is of all your House most dear unto mé: So I desire, that by Conference you will endeavour to give the House of Commons contentment likewise, assuring you, that the exercise of Mercy is no more pleasing to me, than to see both Houses of Parliament consent for my sake, that I should moderate the severity of the Law in so important a Case.

I will not say that your compliance with me in this my intended Mercy, shall make me more willing, but certainly it will make me more cheerful in granting your just Grievances. But if no less than his Life can satisfie my People, *Fiat Justitia.* Thus again recommending the consideration of my Intentions to you, I rest,

Your unalterable and affectionate Friend,
Charles R.

If he must die 'twere Charity to reprieve him till Saturday.

The

The Earl of *Strafford's* SPEECH upon the Scaffold.

Addreſt to the Biſhop of *Armagh*.

My Lord,

I Am come hither, by the good will and pleaſure of the Almighty, to pay that laſt Debt *I owe to Sin; and to ſubmit to the Judgment which hath paſs'd againſt me. I do it with a very contented and quiet Mind. I thank God, I do freely forgive all the World. I thank God, I can ſay it, and truly too, my Conſcience bearing me witneſs, that in all my Employments, ſince I had the Honour to ſerve his Majeſty, I never had any thing in the purpoſe of my Heart, but what tended to the joint and individual Proſperity of King and People, altho' it hath been my ill Fortune to be miſconſtrued.*

There is one thing I deſire to free my ſelf of, and I am confident I ſhall obtain your Chriſtian Charity in the Belief of it. I was ſo far from being againſt Parliaments, *, that I did always think the* Parliaments *of* England *were the moſt happy Conſtitutions that any King-*

dom or Nation lived under; and the beſt means, under God, to make the King and People happy.

For my Death, I here acquit all the World, and beſeech the God of Heaven heartily to forgive them that contriv'd it; tho' in the intentions and purpoſes of my Heart I am not guilty of what I die for. And it is a great comfort for me, his Majeſty conceives me not meriting ſo heavy a Puniſhment as this.

I wiſh this Kingdom all Proſperity and Happineſs, and deſire every one who hears me to conſider ſeriouſly, whether the Reformation of a Kingdom ſhould be written in Letters of Blood. Let me never be ſo unhappy, as that the leaſt drop of my Blood ſhould riſe up in Judgment againſt any of you. But I fear you are in the wrong way.

I profeſs that I die a true and obedient Son of the Church of England, *wherein I was born, and in which I was bred.* Peace and Proſperity be ever unto it.

His

His Majesty's

Declaration and *Repentance*

For the Death of the

Earl of *Strafford.*

I Looked upon my Lord of *Strafford*, as a Gentleman, whose great Abilities might make a Prince rather afraid, than ashamed to employ him in the greatest Affairs of State.

For those were prone to create in him great Confidence of Undertakings, and this was like enough to betray him to great Errors, and many Enemies; wherefore he could not but contract good store, while moving in so high a Sphere, and with so vigorous a Lustre, he must needs, as the Sun, raise many Envious Exhalations, which condensed by a Popular Odium,

were

were capable to caſt a Cloud upon the brighteſt Merit and Integrity.

Though I cannot in my Judgment approve all he did, driven, it may be, by the Neceſſities of Times, and the Temper of that People, more than led by his own Diſpoſition to any Height and Rigour of Actions; yet I could never be convinced of any ſuch Criminouſneſs in him, as willingly to expoſe his Life to the Stroke of Juſtice, and Malice of his Enemies.

I never met with a more unhappy Conjuncture of Affairs than in the Buſineſs of that Unfortunate Earl; when, between my own Unſatisfiedneſs in Conſcience, and a Neceſſity, as ſome told me, of ſatisfying the Importunities of ſome People, I was perſwaded by thoſe, that I think wiſh'd me well, to chuſe rather what was ſafe, than what ſeem'd juſt; prefering the outward Peace of my Kingdoms with Men, before that inward Exactneſs of Conſcience before God.

Indeed I am ſo far from excuſing or denying that Compliance on my Part, for plenary Conſent it was not, to his Deſtruction, whom in my Judgment I thought not, by any clear Law, guilty of Death.

That

That I never bore any Touch of Conſcience with greater Regret; which, as a ſign of my Repentance, I have often with Sorrow confeſſed both to God and Men, as an Act of ſinful Frailty, that it diſcover'd more a Fear of Man than of God, whoſe Name and Place on Earth no Man is worthy to bear, who will avoid the inconveniencies of State, by Acts of ſo high Injuſtice, as no publick Convenience can expiate or compenſate. I ſee it a bad Exchange to wound a Man's own Conſcience, thereby to ſalve State-ſores, to calm the Storms of Popular Diſcontents, by ſtiring up a Tempeſt in a Man's own Boſom.

Nor hath God's Juſtice fail'd in the Event and ſad Conſequences to ſhew the World the Fallacy of that Maxim, *Better one Man periſh, though unjuſtly, than the People be diſpleaſed, or deſtroy'd.* For,

In all likelihood, I could never have ſuffer'd with my People greater Calamity, yet with greater Comfort, had I vindicated *Stafford*'s Innocency, at leaſt, by denying to Sign that deſtructive Bill, according to that Juſtice which my Conſcience ſuggeſted to me, than I have done ſince I gratified ſome Mens unthankful Importunity

with ſo cruel a Favour. And I have obſerved, that thoſe who Counſelled me to Sign that Bill, have been ſo far from receiving the Rewards of ſuch Ingratiatings with the People, that no Men have been haraſſed and cruſh'd more than they: He only has been leaſt vex'd by them, who Counſell'd me not to conſent againſt the Vote of my own Conſcience. I hope God hath forgiven them and me, the ſinful Raſhneſs of that Buſineſs.

To which, being in my Soul ſo fully conſcious, thoſe Judgments God hath pleaſed to ſend upon me, are ſo much the more welcome, as a means, I hope, which his Mercy hath Sanctified ſo to me, as to make me repent of that unjuſt Act, for ſo it was to me; and for the future to teach me, that the beſt Rule of Policy is to prefer the doing of Juſtice before all Enjoyments, and the Peace of my Conſcience before the Preſervation of my Kingdoms.

Nor hath any thing more fortified my Reſolutions againſt all thoſe violent Importunities, which ſince have ſought to gain a like Conſent from me to Acts wherein my Conſcience is unſatisfied, than the

ſharp,

ſharp Touches I have had for what paſſed me in my Lord of *Strafford*'s Buſineſs. Not that I reſolved to employ him in my Affairs againſt the Advice of my Parliament, but I would not have had a Hand in his Death, of whoſe Guiltineſs I was better aſſured than any Man living could be.

Nor were the Crimes objected againſt him ſo clear, as, after a long and fair Hearing, to give convincing Satisfaction to the major Part of both Houſes; eſpecially that of the Lords, of whom ſcarce a third Part were preſent when the Bill paſſed that Houſe. And for the Houſe of Commons, many Gentlemen, diſpoſed enough to diminiſh my Lord *Strafford*'s Greatneſs and Power, yet unſatisfied of his Guilt in Law, durſt not condemn him to die; who for their Integrity in their Votes, were, by poſting their Names, expoſed to the popular Calumny, Hatred, and Fury; which grew then ſo exorbitant in their Clamours for Juſtice, that is, to have both my ſelf and the Two Houſes Vote and do as they would have us, that many, 'tis thought, were rather terrified to concur with the condemning Party, than ſatisfied that of Right they ought ſo to do.

And that after Act vacating the Authority of the Precedent for future Imitation, ſufficiently tells the implacable Enemies, as knowing he had very hard Meaſure, and ſuch as they would be very loath ſhould be repeated to themſelves.

This Tenderneſs and Regret I find in my Soul, for having had any Hand, (and that very unwillingly God knows) in ſhedding one Man's Blood unjuſtly (tho' under the colour and formalities of Juſtice, and Pretences of avoiding publick Miſchiefs which may, I hope, be ſome Evidence before God and Man to all Poſterity, that I am far from bearing juſtly the the vaſt Load and Guilt of all that Blood which has been ſhed in this unhappy War, which ſome Men will needs charge on me, to eaſe their own Souls, who am, and ever ſhall be, more afraid to take away Man's Life unjuſtly, than to loſe my OWN.

But thou, O God, of infinite Mercies, forgive that Act of ſinful Compliance, which hath greater aggravations upon Me than any Man, ſince I had not the leaſt Temptation of Envy or Malice againſt him, and by my Place ſhould

at

at leaſt ſo far have been a Preſerver of him, as to have denied my Conſent to the Deſtruction of him.

O Lord, I acknowledge my Tranſgreſſion, and my Sin is ever before me.

Deliver me from Blood-guiltineſs, O God, thou God of my Salvation, and my Tongue ſhall ſing of thy Righteouſneſs.

Againſt thee have I ſinned, and done this Evil in thy Sight, for thou ſaweſt the Contradiction between my Heart and my Hand.

Yet caſt me not away from thy Preſence; purge me with the Blood of my Redeemer, and I ſhall be clean; waſh me with that precious Effuſion, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow.

Teach me to learn Righteouſneſs by thy Judgment, and to ſee my Frailty in thy Juſtice; while I was perſwaded, by ſhedding one Man's Blood, to prevent After-troubles, thou haſt for that, among other Sins, brought upon me, and upon my Kingdoms, great, long and heavy Troubles.

Make me to prefer Juſtice, which is thy Will, before all contrary Clamours, which are but the Diſcoveries of Man's injurious Will.

It is too much that they have once overcome me, to pleaſe them by diſpleaſing thee;

O never

O never ſuffer me for any Reaſon of State, to go againſt my Reaſon of Conſcience, which is highly to ſin againſt thee, the God of Reaſon and Judge of our Conſciences.

Whatever, O Lord, thou ſeeſt fit to deprive me of, yet reſtore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation, and ever uphold me with thy free Spirit; which ſubjects my Will to none, but thy Light of Reaſon, Juſtice and Religion, which ſhines in my Soul; for thou deſireſt Truth in the inward Parts, and Integrity in the outward Expreſſions.

Lord, hear the Voice of thy Son's and my Saviour's Blood, which ſpeaks better things; and make me and my People to hear the Voice of Joy and Gladneſs, that the Bones which thou haſt broken may rejoyce in thy Salvation.

FINIS.